



**SRO**

STATE SCHOOL REFORM/REDESIGN OFFICE  
Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget

# Unreasonable Hardship Determination Report

**Dream Academy**

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February 2017

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## **Framework**

### **State School Reform/Redesign Office Background and Legal Authority**

The State School Reform/Redesign Office (SRO) was established in 2010 to serve as Michigan's academic accountability office. The mission of the SRO is to turn Michigan's Priority Schools into the highest-performing schools in Michigan. The SRO's vision is to create the necessary conditions for a globally superior public education system. To do this, the SRO uses both incentives for academic success and consequences for chronic failure. The following state and federal statutes establish the SRO and govern the office's action steps:

Michigan's Revised School Code 380.1280c: Section 1280c of the Revised School Code charges the SRO with the responsibility of identifying and supervising the lowest achieving 5% of schools (Priority Schools). Priority Schools submit reform/redesign plans to improve performance, and the SRO is granted authority to implement intervention if academic progress is not made (i.e. CEO operator for multiple schools, State School Reform/Redesign District (SSRD), etc.). Priority Schools are required to submit monitoring reports to the SRO in a manner and frequency as determined by the SRO. The statute also provides exemptions for districts under emergency management.

Michigan's Executive Order No. 2015-9: Executive Order 2015-9 transferred the SRO from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB). It also transferred all authority, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities assigned to MDE and the Superintendent of Public Instruction under MCL 380.1280c to the SRO.

Michigan Public Act 192 (i.e. Enrolled House Bill 5384): The law divides the Detroit Public School District (DPS) into two separate districts and requires the SRO to mandate school closures via specified stipulations.

Under these statutes, the State School Reform/Redesign Office must make notifications and issue orders to Public School Academy Authorizers and/or Traditional Public School Superintendents/Board Presidents establishing different levels of accountability based on the performance of the schools they operate/authorize.

### **Purpose**

On January 20, 2017, the SRO published the order subjecting [School] to a Next Level of Accountability pending an Unreasonable Hardship Determination as required under subsection 391(3), MCL 380.391(3). The purpose of this report is to:

- Outline the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process
- Detail the findings of the Unreasonable Hardship Review
- Publish the final Unreasonable Hardship Determination for **Dream Academy**, and
- Detail next steps that the SRO recommends in light of the final Unreasonable Hardship Determination.

### **Unreasonable Hardship Review Process**

In accordance with MCL 380.391(3), the SRO must complete an analysis of whether closure of **Dream Academy** will result in unreasonable hardship to pupils attending **Dream Academy**. The SRO will consider other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by the public school identified for closure to determine if closing the identified school(s) would result in an unreasonable



hardship for the impacted students. The SRO is committed to ensuring that the closure of a failing school does not necessitate the enrollment of a displaced student in another failing school. The SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review will consist of three parts:

1. **Part 1:** A comprehensive review of all available data related to the past and current performance of the identified school(s)
2. **Part 2:** An academic and an operational on-site review
3. **Part 3:** A detailed examination of other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by the public school identified for closure.

A set of research-based Turnaround Practices served as the framework for the SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review. The Turnaround Practices<sup>1</sup> are based on both academic and practice-based research on the common characteristics of successful turnaround schools and are organized into five different domains:

- **Domain 1:** Leadership, Shares Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration
- **Domain 2:** Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction
- **Domain 3:** Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students
- **Domain 4:** School Climate and Culture
- **Domain 5:** District System: Districts develop systems to support, monitor, and sustain turnaround efforts

By structuring the SRO's Unreasonable Hardship Review around these domains the SRO is acknowledging that in determining unreasonable hardship one must not only examine historic performance but must also work intimately with local community members and educators to determine if the academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround.

All of the information produced and insights gained from the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process have informed the SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination, which consists of a series of 3 Key Questions:

- **Question 1:** Are the academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround?
- **Question 2:** Are there are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?
- **Question 3:** Would the proposed NLA action result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils?

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<sup>1</sup> See Edmonds, 1979; Bryk et al., 2010; Marzano, 2003; Newmann et al., 2001; Lane et al., 2014)

## Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 1: Data Review

In an effort to inform the Unreasonable Hardship Determination, the SRO requested a comprehensive set of both academic, cultural, and operational data from **Dream Academy**. The data provided can be viewed in Appendix A. In reviewing this data as well as previously state-reported academic data, the SRO has identified the following Key Takeaways related to the past, and current realities of **Dream Academy**.

### Data Review Key Takeaways

- **Academic (Domains 2 and 3)**
  - Proficiency
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of proficiency demonstrated for all students in Mathematics was [REDACTED] in 2014 and [REDACTED] in 2016
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of students with disabilities that demonstrated proficiency in Mathematics was 0% in 2014 and [REDACTED] in 2016
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of proficiency demonstrated for all students in Reading/ELA dropped from 8.82% to [REDACTED]
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of economically disadvantaged students that demonstrated proficiency in Reading/ELA also dropped from 8.82% to [REDACTED]
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of proficiency demonstrated for all students in Science grew from [REDACTED]
    - Between 2014 and 2015 the percent of economically disadvantaged students that demonstrated proficiency in Reading/ELA grew from [REDACTED]
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of proficiency demonstrated for all students in Social Studies dropped from [REDACTED]
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percent of economically disadvantaged students that demonstrated proficiency in Reading/ELA dropped from [REDACTED]
  - Graduation Rate
    - Between 2014 and 2015 the graduation rate demonstrated for all students grew from 57.4% (54 students) to 77.8% (72 students)
    - Between 2014 and 2015 the graduation rate demonstrated for African American students grew from 58.8% (51 students) to 76.8% (69 students)
  - Student Instructional Support Systems (Interventions)
    - Academic Intervention Systems: For all students, an Academic Advisory was added to the daily schedule for students in grades 6-12 during which time a certified teacher works with 32 students everyday on homework, grades, study for tests, remediation via Odyssey online program, and attendance/ discipline issues.
    - Teachers and administrators are reviewing the implementation of newly adopted Engage New York Curriculum for literacy and math.
    - Curriculum embedded assessments will be given every four to nine weeks by classroom teachers and results will be reviewed by PLC's who will then recommend instructional adjustments.
    - PLC logs are kept to track the activity, data analysis, and decision making of PLC teams.
    - Monthly walk-throughs at Dream are carried out by Central Administration to look for evidence of implementation of curriculum, instructional practices, and student engagement. It is not clear what this data is used for or how feedback is provided.
    - The Thoughtful Classroom model was adopted for teacher evaluation this year and 5 domains will be implemented with all teaching staff.



- School Advance Administrator Evaluation model was adopted this year and administrators will be evaluated on 3 domains as well as student achievement and student attendance gains.
- With the restructuring of the building, new leadership teams were established. Teams are establishing effective meeting protocols.
- MSTEP, MME, and SAT results will be reviewed as available, by grade as well as by student.
- Through a MDE grant for extended day, additional tutoring services are provided.
- Significant opportunities have been provided to teachers and administrators around improving their practices, improving the services to students, and building teacher and administrator leadership by: Instructional coaching around best practices, summer curriculum study for Engage New York lesson guides and power standards, and PLCs and how to make them work for student learning.
- Provision of teacher training in mathematics by Carnegie Math in grades 6-12.
- Revamp of services provided by instructional coaches in all District buildings with training and oversight provided by Berrien RESA with emphasis on instructional practices and student engagement.
- Social-Emotional: Rededication to PBIS in all buildings with training from Berrien RESA, including school-wide PBIS and classroom management.
- Significant opportunities have been provided to teachers and administrators around improving their practices, improving the services to students, and building teacher and administrator leadership by: Serving children in light of trauma, poverty, and race and PBIS best practices.
- The building administrator and staff have worked with Berrien RESA consultants to implement and enhance their PBIS programs to build positive student behavior.
- Results of a survey given twice a year to parents, students, and staff will be evaluated by each building and plans will be developed for improvement where needed.
- Student discipline and attendance records will be reviewed by building, grade and NWEA growth measures will be analyzed each fall, winter, and spring with improvement plans developed by each building and grade PLCs who will then make instructional adjustments.
- Curriculum
  - ELA: Engaged New York; Public Consulting Group
  - Math: Engaged New York; Eureka
  - Science: Holt Reinhart and Winston
  - Social Studies: Prentice Hall
- **Climate and Culture (Domains 3 and 4)**
  - Enrollment
    - Between 2014 and 2016, enrollment increased from 257 to 268 (13 student difference)
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the number of economically disadvantaged students increased from 256 to 263 (7 student difference).
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the percentage of economically disadvantaged students decreased from 99.6% to 98.1%.
    - African Americans consistently make up 96% or more of the student population.
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the greatest decline in student enrollment occurs in grade 10 from 95 to 71 students.

- The three other high school grades had increases in student enrollment from 11 to 13 students.
- Attendance
  - Between 2014 and 2016 the attendance rate increased from 80.6% to 85.8%.
  - Between 2014 and 2016 the percentage of chronically absent students has increased from 57.5% (146 students) to 64.2% (170 students).
- **Professional (Domains 1 and 5)**
  - Teacher Evaluation
    - Between 2014 and 2016 the number of teachers decreased by one from 16 to 15.
    - The number of teachers rated as highly effective was 0 in 2014 and 0 in 2016.
    - The number of teachers rated as effective increased from 10 (62.5%) to 12 (80.0%) in 2016.
    - There were 3 teachers rated as marginally effective or ineffective in 2016.
    - In 2016, 3 (20.0%) teachers were rated as marginally effective.
    - In 2016, 0 (0%) teachers were rated as ineffective.



## Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 2a: Academic On-Site Review

On **February 9, 2017** three representatives of the SRO conducted the Academic On-Site Review for **Dream Academy**. The purpose of this visit was to gain current and school-specific information related to the current academic realities of **Dream Academy** from its building leaders, teachers, parents and community members.

The Academic On-Site Review was structured as follows:

- Interviews with Building Leadership
- Building Walk-Through with Classroom Observations
- Teacher Leader Focus Group
- Student Focus Group
- Parent/Community Focus Group

In a letter sent on January 27, 2017, the SRO requested that **Dream Academy** nominate both teacher leaders as well as parents and community members to participate in the Academic On-Site Review.

The review was structured around the research-based Turnaround Practices & questions that served to frame both the interviews as well as the focus group discussions. Responses from conversations were analyzed & evaluated for alignment with key indicators of best practices for high-gain, rapid turnaround schools. The following pages provide the results from the site visit. Rubric ratings (see below) and corresponding evidence (in bulleted form) is provided for each Turnaround Practice component.

### Rubric Descriptors

<u>Strong alignment with best practice</u>	<u>Moderate alignment with best practice</u>	<u>Low alignment with best practice</u>
All indicators are evident and there is strong evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively to improve instruction.	Some of the indicators are evident and there is some evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively to improve instruction.	A few or none of the indicators are evident and/or there is little to no evidence that key structures and practices are being used effectively.

A key purpose of the site visit is to assess each school's capacity to engage in accelerated turnaround and to inform decisions regarding unreasonable hardship. As such, site reviewers and the SRO are focused on the following overarching questions.

<p><b>Domain 1: Leadership, Shares Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the school have a collaborative environment (e.g., sufficient teaming structures and ways of working together) that can lead to accelerated instructional improvement?</li> <li>• Does the school leadership have systems in place to monitor and support the implementation of improvement strategies, including the use of frequent classroom observations?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Domain 2: Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the school utilize a common core curriculum that is instructionally coherent and that displays a strong understanding of high quality instruction, among teachers and as supported and observed by administrators?</li> <li>• Does school leadership have a system in place to identify teachers that may need additional support, and specific strategies for providing such support?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domain 3: Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the school have and actively utilize a system of assessments and interventions capable of providing student-specific supports and subsequent monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Domain 4: School Climate and Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the school provide a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and professional culture among adults?</li> </ul>



### Determining Capacity for Successful Turnaround

**Key Question 1:** What are the core issues and challenges that have kept students at your school from achieving? How are you addressing these issues and challenges?

**Key Question 2:** What are the key practices and strategies that distinguish your school, and will allow your school to improve, leading to increased student achievement in the near future?

	Alignment with Best Practice
<b>Adaptive Instructional Improvement</b> All stakeholders espouse an “improvement mindset” reflected in the school’s continuous review and assessment of improvement practices and strategies used within the school. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school stops or modifies strategies that are not working and expands those that are working.</li> </ul>	
<b>Respectful and Trusting Learning Environment</b> All stakeholders (students, teachers, community members, etc.) have high expectations for students and value working with and learning from each other. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and students state that they believe that all of the students in the school will succeed (e.g., will do well in classes, graduate, attend and graduate college).</li> <li>Teachers and administrators work together in formal and informal teams on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	
<b>Instructional Rigor</b> Instruction and instructional practices are engaging, differentiated, and sufficiently challenging for all students. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers provide all students with lessons and instruction directly aligned with common core standards and aligned instructional practices.</li> <li>Written lessons and taught instruction includes stated and written learning objectives, multiple instructional strategies, and challenging (e.g., higher order) tasks, problems, and questioning strategies.</li> </ul>	
<b>Targeted Interventions</b> The school expertly uses specific instructional strategies/interventions executed with a high degree of instructional expertise. Key Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student work is consistently improving.</li> <li>Instructional strategies and interventions are implemented with fidelity.</li> </ul>	

- According to the leadership team, climate and culture issues are showing minor improvement much work remains and the retention of staff is a major concern.

- The school is focused on career readiness for students and helping students find employment. The school receives a high degree of community support from a local car dealership which provides classroom space and hires former students; Whirlpool and Walgreens are also major employers in the area.
- The leadership team and the teachers recognize that academic proficiency and growth are very weak but they prefer to focus on climate, culture, and employability.

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**Turnaround Strategy Domain 1: Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration**

The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration.

**Key Question:** How, and to what extent, do you (and your leadership team) cultivate shared ownership, responsibility, and professional collaboration in the school?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Teaming, Shared Leadership and Responsibility, and Collaboration</b></p> <p>Distributed leadership structures and practices are apparent throughout the school building in the form of an active and well-represented Leadership Team and grade-level and vertical teams.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school leadership team meets regularly and includes representation from all grades and student needs.</li> <li>• Grade-level and vertical teams meet regularly.</li> <li>• Teams exhibit a strong commitment to high expectations for all students and a willingness to work together to improve instruction.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Using Teams, Shared Leadership, and a Collaborative and Trusting Environment to Accelerate Improvement</b></p> <p>Administrators and teachers (through teacher teams or involvement in the leadership team) are monitoring and assessing the implementation and impact of key improvement strategies, use of resources, classroom instructional practices, and non-academic supports on student achievement.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adaptation:</b> Leadership has the demonstrated ability to adapt, innovate and do whatever it takes to improve student achievement.</li> <li>• <b>Instructional Observation:</b> Instruction is formally and informally observed and meaningful feedback is provided. Teachers, as well as students, are held to high expectations.</li> </ul>	

Challenges identified by leadership/staff/community:

- The school's leadership reports that the school lacked experienced classroom teachers in prior years. The school had teachers on staff with 1-2 years' experience and many of them are recent college graduates, although it is not evident that the school or the district are focused on improving teacher capacity.
- The school's leadership reports a significant percentage of staff are long term substitutes.
- The community stakeholders' report that teachers are engaged and students are responding, but evidence of academic improvement is not self-evident.
- The community stakeholders' report that resources have not been provided to overcome barriers and that more time may be needed to support students.



- The community stakeholders' report the following challenges: Instability at the district level; transient population; reconstitution of schools, students being educated in a chaotic district both systemically and organizationally; failure of leadership to give students the best shot at a quality education.
- Attendance data at this school shows high truancy rates and chronic absenteeism.
- The community stakeholders' report suggest that teachers need additional resources and professional training.
- The school's leadership reports low teacher retention due to: lack of a competitive salary; lack of experience in working in high poverty area; staff live outside of school area and travel long distances to work.
- The school's leadership reports that the building is currently not fully staffed as compared to previous years each classroom had two staff members per classroom (paraprofessional and teacher).
- The teachers report that the skill-level of the students varies and learning how to differentiate instruction is challenging.
- The teachers report that student engagement is challenging and the Parent Teacher Organization has not been successful; parent interaction past 6<sup>th</sup> grade is a daily struggle in parent engagement with school.
- The school's leadership reports that many parents did not have success in school and lack the understanding of the importance of education, although it was not clear how this issue was being addressed.
- The community stakeholders' report that African Americans are "14% of population in Benton Harbor but 48% of juvenile court referrals; students in the juvenile facility are usually three grade levels behind; and the high dropout rate at BHHS is 50%".

Challenges/Students:

- Students report that teachers were afraid of students and lack self-confidence in their teaching abilities.
- Students report wanting to see more leaders in the classroom. The students believe that a 50/50 split exists with good vs. bad students and that makes it difficult for even the best students to learn.

Key practices and strategies that distinguish your school

- The school uses on line Odyssey and provides after school tutoring.
- The school's leadership team provides one on one counseling and tutoring to support the 198 student enrollees.
- According to the leadership, NWEA data shows that improvement is being made in student achievement but the data was not shared. Staff needs to cross-walk the NWEA to applicable MSTEP benchmarks and skills for students to show the level of expected gains.

**Turnaround Strategy Domain 2: Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction**

The school uses an aligned system of common core curricula, assessments, and common instructional practices across the school and content areas, and employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive instruction.

**Key Question:** What are the strategies and practices that you and your colleagues use to improve instruction? Specifically, how do you work to improve teachers' instruction?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Common core curriculum and aligned and rigorous instructional practices.</b> Administrators and teachers develop and use vertically and horizontally aligned curricula and instructional strategies that includes common units, lessons, assessments, and instructional strategies and language within and across grades and content areas.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers' unit and lesson plans are similarly structured, incorporating best practices, directly linking lesson content with the grade-level standards and standards taught in prior and subsequent grades.</li> <li>A common set of instructional strategies, academic language, and other learning tools are evident in lessons and in practice, to enable students to access content.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Defined expectations for high quality instructional practices</b> The school has a clear instructional focus and shared expectations for instructional best practices that address students' instructional needs.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders and teachers understand the instructional focus and how the instructional focus informs (or is evident in) classroom practice.</li> <li>Teachers have received training and professional development on the instruction focus and related instructional strategies.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Teacher support and feedback to improve instruction</b> Teachers are actively supported to develop high quality lessons, deliver high quality lessons and instruction and to become experts in using and refining effective instructional strategies.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal (or administrators or coaches) spend significant time in classrooms, observing teachers' instruction and providing teachers with constructive and useful feedback on instructional practices.</li> <li>Teachers (and teacher team) use a variety of standards-based assessments to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies and modify instruction accordingly.</li> </ul>	

- Dream Academy implemented Engaged New York for Math and ELA beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.
- Staff meets every Wednesday for PLC and to communicate with BHHS math teachers about supports needed to improve new curriculum.

- According to the leadership team, teachers receive additional support/resources with the new curriculum through Berrien RESA and BHHS.
- Leadership reports that the school is focusing on student engagement and attendance; attendance has increased and they have assigned someone to specifically address this area (average daily attendance 85%).
- According to the leadership team, Instructional coaches spending 2 hrs. /every 2 weeks focusing on student engagement, test taking skills and classroom management.
- According to the teachers, they are provided with opportunities to observe the practices of their peers.
- Classroom observations, including a review of student work, did not provide evidence of sufficient rigor.

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**Turnaround Strategy Domain 3: Providing Student-Specific Supports and Instruction to All Students**

The school is able to provide student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs

**Key Question:** How, and to what extent, does your school provide student-specific supports and interventions to students?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Tiered and Targeted Interventions for Students and Monitoring for Effectiveness</b></p> <p>The school has a system (structures, practices, resources) for providing targeted instructional interventions and supports to all students which also includes close monitoring of the impact of tiered interventions on students' progress.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are provided with targeted, student-specific instruction and interventions in direct response to their academic areas of need, rather than placing entire groups of students in intervention groups.</li> <li>• The impact of classroom-based and tiered interventions is frequently monitored (e.g., regularly, in 2, 4, or 6 week intervals and often by grade-level teams or by school support teams) and then refined in direct response to students' needs.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Data Use and Data Informed Targeting of Interventions</b></p> <p>Administrators and teachers use a variety of ongoing assessments (formative, benchmark, and summative) to frequently and continually assess instructional effectiveness and to identify students' individual academic needs.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of valid and reliable assessments (standards-based and performance assessments) are used consistently, within and across grades and content area.</li> <li>• Administrators and teachers are using assessment to identify the specific students needing additional support and the targeted areas of need for each specific student.</li> </ul>	

- The school uses on line Odyssey and provides after school tutoring.
- Leadership team provides one on one counseling and tutoring to support the 198 student enrollees.
- The Leadership added 7<sup>th</sup> hour advisory to provide almost one-on-one mentor and/or advocate for students.
- A second group of administrators monitor student grades and attendance to ensure students complete necessary coursework for graduation (credit recovery).

**Turnaround Strategy Domain 4: School Climate and Culture**

The school has established a climate and culture that provides a safe, orderly and respectful environment for students and a collegial, collaborative, and professional culture among teachers that supports the school's focus on increasing student achievement.

**Key Question:** How does your school attend to students' social-emotional health and establish a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students?

Turnaround Strategy Components	Alignment with Best Practice
<p><b>Safety and secure learning environment.</b> The school has established and provides a safe and secure learning environment for students, staff and community members.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student to student interaction and teacher to student interactions are respectful and considerate, as observed during the visit.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Shared Behavioral Expectations that support student learning</b> Administrators and teachers have and use a clearly established set of behavioral expectations and practices that supports students' learning.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations of student behavior are written and clearly shared and understood throughout the school building.</li> <li>• Behavioral expectations are reinforced through consistently applied rewards and consequences (consistent among and across teachers and grades).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Targeted and effective social-emotional supports</b> The school has identified, established, and proactively provides effective social-emotional resources and supports for students in need of such supports and assistance.</p> <p>Key indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has identified a wide array of effective social-emotional responses and supports for students in need of such assistance and support.</li> <li>• Students that may need or benefit from social-emotional supports are identified and receive targeted social-emotional support.</li> <li>• Data on the effectiveness of social-emotional supports is collected and monitored.</li> </ul>	

- The school has a Behavior Interventionist Specialist who is also a licensed SSW on staff
- The school implemented PBIS last year.
- Monthly school-wide town hall meetings are held and students are provided an opportunity to voice their concerns; talk about expectations and share where staff falls short.
- The school uses an internal referral form place to ensure uniform compliance with the school dress code.
- The Department of Probation partners with the school in a concerted effort to keep students in school and they have seen improvements in the efforts of the school to work collaboratively with them.



**Turnaround Strategy Domain 5: District System to Support Accelerated Improvement and Turnaround**

*The district has developed systems for identifying schools that are not performing well, and strategies for monitoring and supporting school leadership and teachers.*

*Examples of district systems:*

- *Strategic placement and assignment of principals and teachers in high need schools, including the use of incentives to get the right leaders and teachers in high need schools.*
- *Provision of additional staffing and resource autonomy to leaders in high need schools*
- *Provision of additional supports (e.g., coaching supports, instructional resources) to high need schools.*

**Key Questions:**

- How does the district monitor and/or support you in your efforts to improve instruction and raise student achievement?
- To what extent has the district provided you with additional autonomy to make changes to staff (e.g., to hire new teachers and/or quickly remove teachers not supportive of your work), to the school's schedule, and in your use of resources? How much autonomy do you have?

	<b>Alignment with Best Practice</b>
<b>District Capacity - Core Functions</b> The District has established and/or provides schools with base supports necessary for effective teaching and learning (Core curriculum and professional development, assessments, data systems, instructional materials, human capital).	
<b>District capacity - Monitor and support</b> The district has established and communicated a district-wide improvement strategy, including a vision and specific goals for improvement. The improvement strategy includes specific strategies for monitoring and supporting schools (leaders, teachers, and students).	
<b>District Capacity – Conditions and Autonomy</b> The district provides schools with sufficient autonomy and authority to implement turnaround actions, while holding schools accountable for results.	

- The district provides opportunities for interaction with BHHS and the School has developed a partnership with Berrien RESA to support effective teaching and learning.
- The District provides additional resources (i.e. medical, home issues) to support students at Dream Academy.
- The district has four priority schools, three of which are among the 38 identified for a next level of accountability. This indicates the need for an intervention that addresses systemic issues.
- Dream Academy was a priority school when it was a charter school (ending June 2016) and was assimilated into the district with a track record of many years of under-performance. The district's decision to add this school to its portfolio reflects on the districts decision-making processes.



**Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 2b: Operational On-Site Review (Facility Conditions Index)**

The SRO partnered with DTMB's Facilities & Business Services Administration Office (SFA) to determine a facility conditions index (FCI) for **Dream Academy**. The FCI measures maintenance and repair costs against current replacement cost of the building. The lower the number, the less cost effective it is for the district to keep the building open.

All inspections were designed to be non-intrusive and the results were based on observations and assumptions given the factual knowledge provided.

**FCI SCORE: 56.5**

A copy of DTMB's FCI report is attached to this report as Appendix B.

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### Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 3: Access and Availability

Whether statutorily required under MCL 380.391(3), MCL 380.507(6), MCL 380.528(6), or MCL 380.561(6), or optionally adopted under MCL 380.1280c, the SRO is committed to completing an analysis of whether the proposed closure will result in unreasonable hardship to pupils attending **Dream Academy**. The SRO will consider other public school options available to students in the grade levels offered and geographic area served by **Dream Academy** to determine if the closure would result in an unreasonable hardship for the impacted students. The SRO is committed to ensuring that any closure does not necessitate the enrollment of a displaced student in another failing school. When evaluating the sufficiency of other public school options for affected pupils and unreasonable hardship, the SRO evaluates a variety of factors that can generally be organized into three different categories. These categories include, but are not limited to:

- **Geography:** Are there schools within a reasonable number of miles from the school identified that serve the same grade levels as the identified school?
- **Performance:** Are there schools that were identified during the geographic evaluation that also have an acceptable Top-to-Bottom ranking?
- **Access:** Do the students that would be displaced by the NLA Action have reasonable access to the schools identified during both the geographic and performance evaluations?

The results of the SRO's analysis are included in the below table. The number of schools that meet the parameters defined in the left most two columns is included in column #3 and the estimated capacity of the qualifying schools is included in column #4. The right-most two columns define the # of qualifying schools that would not require students to utilize the schools-of-choice legislation (MCL 388.1705/MCL 388.1705c) to gain access and the estimated capacity of those qualifying schools that would not require utilization of the schools-of-choice legislation.

Distance Parameter (Maximum in miles)	TTB Ranking Parameter (Minimum)	# of Qualifying School-of-Choice Schools	Estimated Capacity of Qualifying School-of-Choice Schools	# of Qualifying Local Access Schools	Estimated Capacity of Qualifying Local Access Schools	Total # of Qualifying Schools that Displaced Students Could Access	Total Estimated Capacity of Qualifying Schools that Displaced Students Could Access
5	25	1	10	0	0	1	10
10	25	3	34	1	0	4	34
15	25	6	72	1	0	7	72
20	25	10	99	1	0	11	99
25	25	15	180	1	0	16	180
30	25	16	180	1	0	17	180

#### Unreasonable Hardship Data Key Takeaways

- There is 1 accessible school of choice that are qualifying and that is located nearby, within 5 miles. This accessibility was not spoken of by the leadership, parents, or teachers. It could accommodate up to 10 students.
- There are no accessible local access schools, within a 5-mile radius and only 1 within a 10 mile radius. This could accommodate any students.
- The total number of schools within a 10 mile radius that are accessible is 4 schools, and could accommodate up to 34 students.
- Community members and parents expressed that it would be very difficult for students at this school to find comparable educational opportunities given the diverse needs of students.



**Unreasonable Hardship Review Part 4: Final Determination**

The SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination is based on a comprehensive review of all available data, the results from both operational and academic on-site review visits and an examination the other public school options that are available to the students that would be impacted by the closure of **Dream Academy**. All of the information produced and insights gained from the Unreasonable Hardship Review Process that have been detailed in this report, were considered when answering the three key questions that comprise the SRO's Final Unreasonable Hardship Determination.

**Question 1:** Are the academic and operational and academic realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround?

<input type="checkbox"/>	The academic and operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The academic but not the operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround
<input type="checkbox"/>	The operational but not the academic realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither the academic nor the operational realities of the identified school reflective of a school poised for rapid turnaround

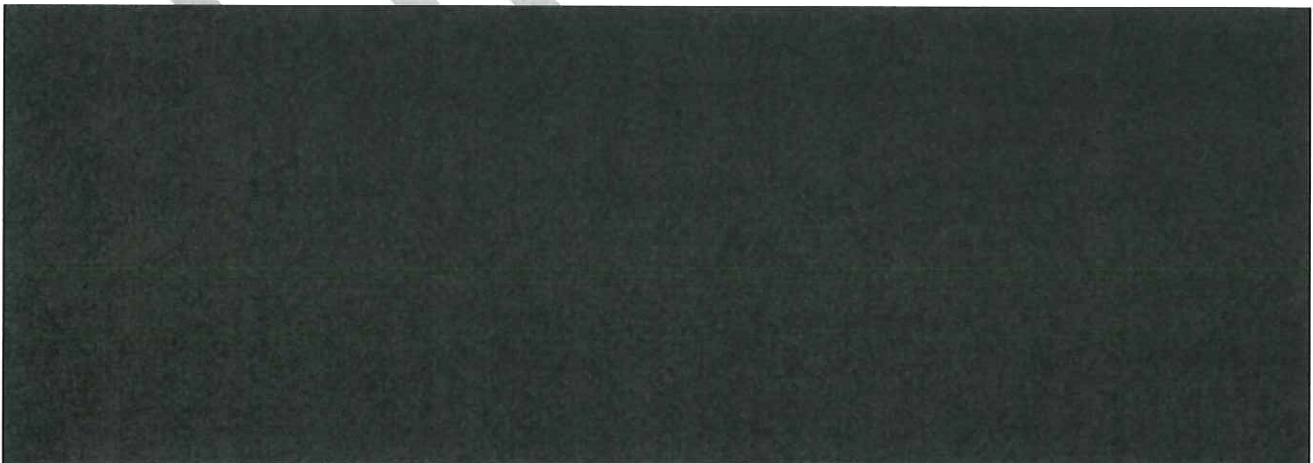
**Question 2:** Are there are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?

<input type="checkbox"/>	There are sufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?
<input type="checkbox"/>	There are insufficient other public school options reasonably available to these pupils?

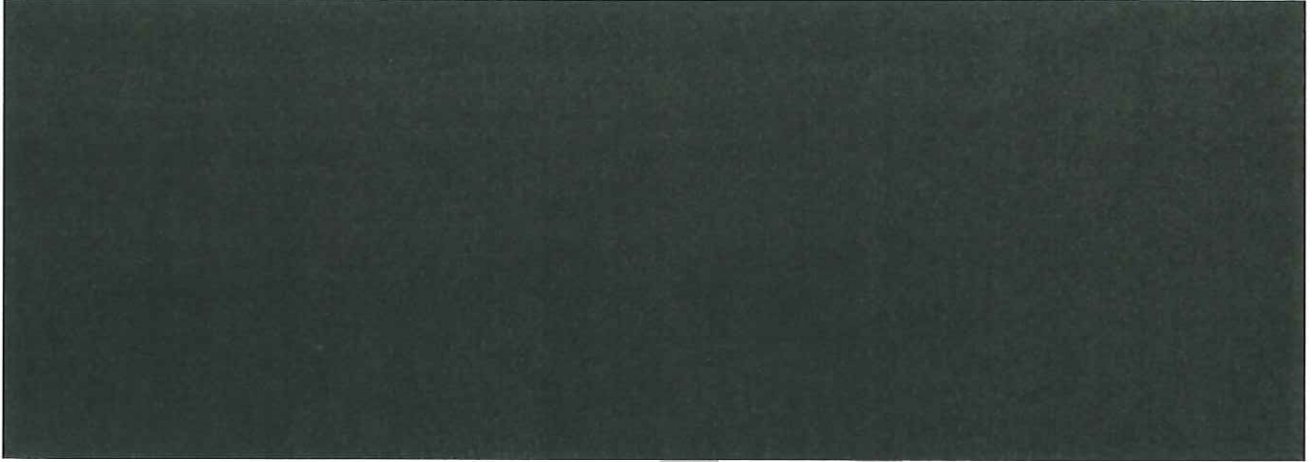
**Question 3:** Would the proposed NLA action result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils?

<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed NLA action would not result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed NLA action would result in an unreasonable hardship to the displaced pupils

**Determination:**



**Next Steps:**



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## **APPENDIX A: SRO Unreasonable Hardship Data Request Packet**

The SRO is committed to ensuring that the Unreasonable Hardship Determination required under MCL 380.391(3), MCL 380.507(6), MCL 380.528(6), MCL 380.561(6), or optionally adopted under MCL 380.1280c is as informed as possible. Therefore, the SRO is requested that the following information be provided in an editable format (e.g., .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, etc.) by Tuesday, February 1, 2017. Where possible, the information provided will be verified against previously reported and publically available data.

### **Data review components:**

- Academic
- Climate and Culture
- Professional
- Operational

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**Academic Data****Top-to-Bottom Rankings by Year**

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
NULL	NULL	0	3	3

**Student Proficiency – Mathematics**

Student Group	% Proficient or Above 2013-2014	% Proficient or Above 2014-2015	% Proficient or Above 2015-2016
All Students			
Native American			
Asian			
African-American			
Hispanic			
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White			
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged			
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)			
English Language Learners			

**Student Proficiency – Reading/ELA**

Student Group	% Proficient or Above 2013-2014	% Proficient or Above 2014-2015	% Proficient or Above 2015-2016
All Students	8.82	7.55	
Native American			
Asian			
African-American	9.09	5.77	
Hispanic			
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White			
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged	8.82	7.55	
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)			
English Language Learners			

**Student Proficiency – Science**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2013-2014</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2014-2015</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2015-2016</b>
All Students			
Native American			
Asian			
African-American			
Hispanic			
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White			
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged			
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)			
English Language Learners			

**Student Proficiency – Social Studies**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2013-2014</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2014-2015</b>	<b>% Proficient or Above 2015-2016</b>
All Students		5.66	
Native American			
Asian			
African-American			
Hispanic			
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White			
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged		5.66	
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)			
English Language Learners			

**4-Year Graduation Rates (if Applicable)**

<b>Student Group</b>	<b># In Cohort 2013-2014</b>	<b>% Graduated 2013-2014</b>	<b># In Cohort 2014-2015</b>	<b>% Graduated 2014-2015</b>
All Students	54	57.4%	72	77.8%
Male	21	38.1%	40	70.0%
Female	33	69.7%	32	87.5%
Native American				
Asian				
African-American	51	58.8%	69	76.8%
Hispanic				
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander				
White				
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic				
Economically Disadvantaged	54	57.4%	72	77.8%
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)				
English Language Learners				



## Climate and Culture Data

Enrollment by Subgroup<sup>2</sup>

Race	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
All Students	257	285	268
Male	131	143	138
Female	126	142	130
Native American			
Asian			
African-American	249	274	264
Hispanic			
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander			
White			
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic			
Economically Disadvantaged	256	284	263
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)	25	29	28
English Language Learners			

## Enrollment by Grade

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
2013-2014	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	49	95	58	55	257
2014-2015	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	97	74	60	285
2015-2016	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	71	71	66	268

## Special Population Percentages

	2013-2014 (%)	2014-2015 (%)	2015-2016 (%)
English Language Learner			
Students with Disabilities (IEP & 504)	9.7%	10.2%	10.4%
Economically Disadvantaged	99.6%	99.6%	98.1%

## Attendance

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Attendance Rate (%)	80.6%	81.5%	85.8%
Percent Chronically Absent	57.5%	62.2%	64.2%
Chronically Absent Student Count	146	176	170

<sup>2</sup> Enrollment by student(s) does not necessarily indicate that the student(s) will take state assessments.

**Professional Data****Teacher Evaluations**

	<b># of Teachers 2013-2014</b>	<b>% of Teachers 2013-2014</b>	<b># of Teachers 2014-2015</b>	<b>% of Teachers 2014-2015</b>	<b># of Teachers 2015-2016</b>	<b>% of Teachers 2015-2016</b>
Highly Effective	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Effective	10	62.5%	9	75.0%	12	80.0%
Marginally Effective	6	37.5%	3	25.0%	3	20.0%
Ineffective	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Total Teachers	16
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12
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15
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